United Nations E/ICEF/2017/P/L.6

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
9 August 2017
English
Original: English/French/Spanish

For decision

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 2017
12-15 September 2017
Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Country programme document

Kyrgyzstan

Summary

The country programme document (CPD) for Kyrgyzstan is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and approval at the present session, on a no-objection basis. The CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of $6,730,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $25,000,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2018 to 2022.

In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, the present document reflects comments made by Executive Board members on the draft CPD that was shared 12 weeks before the second regular session of 2017.

* E/ICEF/2017/14

17-13715 (E) 110817

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Programme rationale

1. Kyrgyzstan is a multi-ethnic country, home to over 80 different ethnic groups, which has been following a fragile path towards consolidating its democracy. It is a lower-middle-income economy, with a poverty rate of 32 per cent, and a chronic poverty rate of about 10 per cent. A significant proportion of the population has an income just above the poverty line, and is therefore are susceptible to external shocks: bad harvests, fluctuating international energy and food prices, or declining remittances. Up to 15 per cent of the population works abroad, and an estimated 1 million people moved from rural to urban areas in Kyrgyzstan in recent years. Remittances from out-migrants, estimated to number around 500,000, constitute 30 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and expose Kyrgyzstan to regional and global economic volatility.

2. Poverty affects children and women the most: nearly 1 million children (41 per cent of the total) live in poverty and are vulnerable to disasters, and almost 30 per cent of households are headed by women. More than two thirds of children live in rural areas, where they experience increased risk of deprivation and social exclusion, low access to health, to education and to social services, and limited possibilities for quality learning or recreational activities. Poverty used to predominate in rural areas but is becoming an urban phenomenon: the gap between rural and urban poverty shrank to just 2.5 percentage points by 2015. The national poverty reduction programme, the Monthly Benefit for Poor Families with Children, is insufficient to significantly reduce child poverty. While public spending on social sectors absorbs a high share of the State budget, structural bottlenecks, particularly the inefficiency of public finance management and the absence of programme-based budgeting, hamper efforts of social-sector reform. Official development assistance constitutes 8.5 per cent of the State budget.

3. Some improvements to the well-being of children have been made in survival, nutrition, treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS, juvenile justice and preschool education. However, significant inequities persist between regions, urban and rural areas, and wealth quintiles. The under-five mortality rate is 29 per 1,000 live births, with over 80 per cent of deaths occurring in the first year of life. The rate in rural areas is 1.6 times higher than that of cities. Neonatal, infant and under-five mortality in the poorest quintile are between 2 and 3 times that in richest quintile.[1]

4. While national statistics indicate that home visits for newborns are at almost 100 per cent, the 2014 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) found that only 25 per cent of newborns received postnatal care visits within two days of discharge from the maternity ward. The MICS also showed that stunting, or chronic malnutrition, affects 21 per cent of children under 5 in the rural and poorest areas, and 9 per cent in urban areas. It indicated that exclusive breastfeeding among children aged 0–6 months, increased from 32 per cent to 41 per cent during 2006–2014. Of children under 5, severe acute malnutrition affects 2.8 per cent and iron-deficiency anaemia affects 43 per cent.[2]

5. The pregnancy rate among adolescents aged 14–18 increased,[3] from 12.6 live births per 1,000 women in 2009 to 17.9 live births in 2013. The proportion of women among

[1] National Statistical Committee (NSC) of the Kyrgyz Republic and UNICEF. Kyrgyzstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014.

[2] NSC, Ministry of Health and ICF International. *Kyrgyz Republic Demographic and Health Survey 2012*. Bishkek and Calverton, Maryland (United States of America), 2013.

[3] NSC.

people with HIV also increased between 2011 and 2013, from 30 per cent to 42 per cent,[4] while 51 per cent of new HIV cases registered in 2014 were among women of reproductive age.

6. Several bottlenecks affect health outcomes and hamper further progress: health-care services and life-saving interventions for mothers and children use outdated methods, lack alignment with global standards and are not patient-centred. There are also significant gaps in the continuum of care and overall weaknesses in the public health system. Moreover, health workers often lack sufficient capacity to provide quality hospital and primary care to save lives of newborns at risk, to identify developmental delays in children, and to inform and support caregivers in seeking health care and immunization and in adopting good child-rearing practices.

7. Although enrolment in preschool education increased from 11 per cent to 23 per cent during 2006–2014,[5] with participation doubling among the poorest children, the lack of early learning opportunities remains a significant concern. Preschool curricula are outdated and differ among institutions, and teaching methodologies are not child-centred. Most children with special-education needs are home-schooled or, if they attend kindergarten, do not receive extra attention. Teachers generally lack the competencies required for inclusive early learning, parents and local authorities are often unaware of support available, and referral services are scarce.

8. The educational situation of children with disabilities and children out of school remains 'hidden'. Belonging to a minority ethnicity group can heighten the risk of exclusion from education: Russian speakers have the highest proportion of out-of-school children in primary education, and speakers of Uzbek and other minority languages have the highest proportion in secondary education. Learning outcomes in secondary school are low, despite the fact that one fifth of public expenditure is allocated to education. Some 20 per cent of children do not complete upper-secondary education, and according to the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), more than 80 per cent of children 15 years old lack basic skills in reading, mathematics and scientific literacy. One main bottleneck is that education data are not used for policymaking or for managing performance.

9. About 26,700 children with disabilities were registered with the Government in 2014 (about 1 per cent of all children). However, it is likely that this number does not include all children with disabilities, especially considering the fact that countries typically have about 5 per cent of such children among their populations. The main reasons why children with disabilities are often not registered at birth are stigma and the families' belief that their child will not survive for long. Children with disabilities often lack adequate access to public services and basic support services, such as those for early identification, development and rehabilitation. Stigma and discrimination against these children are common and are usually more pronounced in rural areas.

10. Overall, 10 per cent of children live with neither biological parent[6] and are mostly in the care of their extended-family members. These children are vulnerable to being deprived

[4] Country progress report on the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, 2014.
[5] MICS 2014.
[6] Ibid.

of education or to violence or neglect.[7] Girls generally are at risk of child marriage. Some 13 per cent of women aged 20–49 were married before the age of 18.[8]

11. A large number of children are survivors or witnesses of violence, including in alternative-care settings, schools and detention facilities. Corporal punishment is not expressly prohibited, and according to the 2014 MICS, many parents consider physical violence an effective form of discipline. A survey of 2,132 children showed that nearly 73 per cent faced abuse and neglect at home: 51 per cent verbal abuse, 39 per cent psychological abuse, 37 per cent physical abuse, and 2 per cent sexual abuse.[9]

12. Only 6 per cent of children in residential institutions are full orphans. The vast majority are placed in residential care for reasons related to poverty, disability, single parenthood, migration, or to gain access to education.[10] In 2012, one third of children living in State care were children with disabilities.[11] Some 43 per cent of registered children with disabilities received education in segregated boarding schools, in specialized schools or through home schooling — which are usually of very low quality.[12] If sufficient social and family support were provided, most children in residential care could remain with their families, in line with the principle of "last resort" of the internationally adopted Guidelines on the Alternative Care for Children.

13. Even though only 5 per cent of the GDP is spent on benefits targeting poverty, public investments in social protection and social insurance absorb 11 per cent of the GDP, leaving little room for expanding the fiscal space for additional pro-poor and social-protection programmes. In order to better allocate resources to the most disadvantaged, the Government needs to create results-based social service systems and modernize regulations at the central and local levels. One barrier to achieving greater quality and efficiency of social services is poor-quality data that are not disaggregated and lack comparability. Improved data are needed to inform decision-making across the public sectors.

14. While some progress has been made in the treatment of juvenile offenders, there is still no specialization of judges and prosecutors, and police officers are not trained in child-sensitive investigations. The 2012 revision of the Children's Code draws on the standards established by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, modernization of the administration of justice for children is hampered by two barriers: practices that do not meet international standards and a body of fragmented and contradictory laws and policies.

15. Despite the successful process of peace recovery initiated by the President and supported by the United Nations following the conflict in the south of Kyrgyzstan in 2010, the situation remains fragile in the Ferghana Valley, home to many ethnic minorities. These and other vulnerable populations in Kyrgyzstan have experienced social injustice and a lack of trust in authorities.[13] This is exacerbated by the high rate of youth unemployment and underemployment, and by many adolescent girls and boys feeling disenfranchised and

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[7] International Federation for Human Rights, *Women and children from Kyrgyzstan affected by migration — an exacerbated vulnerability*, p. 49, Paris, 2016.

[8] MICS 2014.

[9] UNICEF, "Child Abuse and Neglect in Families in the Kyrgyz Republic", 2009.

[10] UNICEF, Situation analysis of children's residential care institutions in Kyrgyzstan, 2012.

[11] Ibid. p.7.

[12] Ministry of Social Development, *Itogy deyatel'nosti Ministerstva sotsial'nogo razvitiya Kyrgyzskoy Respubliki 2013 god*, p. 4, Bishkek, 2014.

[13] UNDP, "Access to justice for vulnerable groups in the Kyrgyz Republic: findings from baseline assessment in Bishkek, Chuy Province, Osh City and Osh Province", 2014.

experiencing injustice and inequality. By seeking work abroad, many people avoid the shame of being unable to sustain their kin, but they often leave children behind without protection from violence and abuse, and in a weak childcare system. Children and young people become easily influenced by extremely negative views about 'other' communities.[14] They find themselves in an environment characterized by local conflicts, poor intercommunal relations and divided ethnic communities.

16. Prevailing social norms hold children inferior, their potential generally unrecognized. Children and adolescents in general, and particularly girls and minorities, are discouraged from voicing their opinions, especially when they oppose the views of elders. There is a need to embrace young people as agents of change and create opportunities for their contribution, and to engage the community to challenge negative gender norms and harmful traditional practices, such as child marriage, bride-kidnapping, among others.[15]

17. Every year, Kyrgyzstan records as much as $35 million worth of damage from natural disasters.[16] Nearly all of the country is vulnerable to frequent earthquakes, avalanches, floods, mudflows and landslides, the latter causing the most deaths.[17] More than 10,000 homes are in landslide-prone areas in the south. There are more than 3,000 earthquakes registered annually. Children are among the most vulnerable to natural disasters. Climate change poses potential risks. The average temperature increased by 1.4 ° C between 1990 and 2010. The capacity of institutions, communities, and individuals to adapt to climate change is low: local governments have a poor knowledge of risk factors, and resources are spent on disaster response rather than on preparedness. Eighty-nine per cent of schools and preschools do not meet minimum safety standards and require immediate retrofitting or reconstruction.[18]

Programme priorities and partnerships

18. The 2018–2022 Government of the Kyrgyz Republic –UNICEF country programme is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the 2015–2030 Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change Adaptation.

19. The programme of cooperation will complement national efforts to enable all children and adolescents in Kyrgyzstan, especially the most disadvantaged, to enjoy their rights and develop to their full potential in an inclusive and protective society. It will achieve results by first identifying invisible populations: children of migrant parents, with disabilities, out of school, survivors of violence, and members of minorities and other marginalized and socially vulnerable groups. It will set up modern social services to reach these children and

[14] International Crisis Group, "Kyrgyzstan: State Fragility and Radicalization", Brussels, 2016.
[15] The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and UNICEF, Situation Analysis of Children in the Kyrgyz Republic, p. 20, 2015. See also Deutsche Gesellshaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), "Youth in Kyrgyzstan", Bishkek, 2015.
[16] Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic, Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2015–2017.
[17] State Agency for Environment Protection and Forestry, The Kyrgyz Republic's Second National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2009.
[18] UNICEF, Assessment of safety in school and preschool education institutions in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2013.

take appropriate measures to overcome social norms and practices that impede the survival, development and protection of children and their access to justice.

20. The programme will directly contribute to national goals, policies and programmes: the 2015–2020 National Strategy on Gender, the 2012–2020 Education Development Strategy, the 2017–2020 Youth Development Policy, the 2018–2022 Food Security and Nutrition Strategy, the 2017–2027 State Programme on Family Support and Child Protection, and the 2016–2030 National Strategy for Comprehensive Safety and Security. It will also provide technical advice for the development of the successors to the 2014–2018 State Programme on Justice for Children and the 2012–2018 Health Strategy. The programme is aligned with the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, contributes to all four Kyrgyzstan outcomes of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and will support the country's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

21. The evaluation of the 2012–2017 country programme provided two important lessons. First, the peacebuilding programme demonstrated that purposeful interaction across different ethnic communities and access for vulnerable children and families to basic services does help to build stability and prevent conflict. Second, to achieve sustainable system-level change, supply-driven interventions need to be matched with creation of demand and require better interactions between municipalities, districts and the capital, linking municipal-level work to national-level change. Given the political fragility and the increasing appeal of extremist ideologies among disenfranchised populations, the need for international support remains high in the border areas.

22. UNICEF will continue its partnership with United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, the Global Partnership for Education, Gavi, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, and bilateral donor governments. Partnerships with civil society organizations, academia, the media and the private sector will create a critical mass of supporters of the realization of child rights.

Child rights-based monitoring systems and decision-making

23. The Sustainable Development Goals have renewed national interest in the quality and availability of statistics for management, policy design, and monitoring performance. The Kyrgyz National Statistical Committee has initiated the preparation of a monitoring system for these Goals. Most social sectors run management information systems supported by development partners, and national statistical systems are relatively well developed. However, the disaggregation of data needs improving.

24. Through this programme component, UNICEF will provide technical advice to institutionalize the measurement of non-monetary child deprivation. A MICS on child-welfare indicators is planned for 2018. Improvement of both cash transfers and financing services will result in greater effectiveness and coverage of the social protection system.

25. The programme will promote transparent and participatory planning and budgeting for children. UNICEF will continue to support initiatives to enhance existing accountability mechanisms, increasing the capacity of authorities in equitable public finance for children, and equipping them with simplified budget data and information on child-related targets. Budget briefs on issues pertaining to child well-being will be prepared for parliamentarians at critical stages of the budget cycle.

26. UNICEF will also assist two priority districts in modelling Youth- and Child-Friendly Local Governance, which will inform sustainable systems for the meaningful participation of children and adolescents and better reflect their voice in local policymaking. Children will contribute to identifying local needs, planning and monitoring. The model is expected to lead to a national strategy, guidelines, tools and recommendations for institutionalizing the initiative nationwide, prioritizing children's rights in local agendas and translating the Sustainable Development Goals into local action.

Equitable access to services for child survival, learning and development

27. This component will promote universal coverage of quality health and education services to increase access by the most vulnerable children to basic health and education. It will support improved oversight and a real-time monitoring system to help to overcome both supply- and demand-side barriers, including through community-based communication for social change, social mobilization and empowerment.

28. The programme will improve referral systems to reach vulnerable children with a range of appropriate health services, including at local and community levels. UNICEF will pay particular attention to improving neonatal care to reduce infant mortality, and to increasing awareness and skills of families on care practices, particularly to address parents' growing distrust of immunization. Support will be provided for gender-sensitive adolescent health services to become more effective. Communication for social change will aim to prevent early pregnancy. Prevention of HIV infections, particularly among women and girls, will be a priority.

29. UNICEF will continue to provide technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of the Government and key stakeholders to implement the Law on Flour Fortification and reduce iron-deficiency anaemia among children and women. Along with supporting implementation of the National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy, UNICEF will continue to assist the Government in improving coordination among key stakeholders within the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement.

30. To reduce the number of children out of school and prevent school dropout, the programme will work with local authorities, communities and teachers to improve their capacity to identify children at risk of dropout. UNICEF will also support an improved Education Management Information System, strengthening schools to deliver quality and inclusive services, and enabling stronger monitoring of procedures that refer children at risk to social-work and family-support services.

31. UNICEF will continue to provide leadership in implementation of the Education Strategy 2020, focusing on achieving better learning outcomes for children. A comprehensive system to measure the quality of early-learning development standards will drive programmatic and policy work, including for the mobilization of pedagogical universities and teacher-training institutes, as well as communities, to support quality early learning of all children.

32. The programme will enable Kyrgyzstan to better coordinate services between various disciplines and facilitate collaboration across sectors, contributing to the continuity of care and creating synergies and greater effectiveness. This will contribute to the reduction of child and maternal mortality, malnutrition and school dropout, and increase access to early learning and adolescent health services. Building on regional knowledge-exchange initiatives, UNICEF will promote horizontal cooperation, including on learning from best

practice and innovation, in the areas cited above and in the promotion of good parental skills.

33. This component will support central and local authorities to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable children and communities to better cope with the impact of climate change, natural disasters, stresses and shocks. UNICEF will provide policy advice and help the Government to better manage disaster risks and more effectively implement Safe Schools and Preschools in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2015–2024. Based on the findings of the Climate Landscape Analysis for Children (2017), UNICEF will promote the integration of child-focused disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures in social-sector services.

Child protection and access to justice

34. This programme component seeks to strengthen public-services outreach to vulnerable children, especially survivors of violence, children without parental care, particularly those left behind by migrant parents, children with disabilities, and children involved in civil and criminal proceedings. It will also addresses the prevention of child marriage. It will prioritize early identification and prevention of abusive situations for children, through non-violent parenting, schools-without-violence initiatives, provision of legal aid and improving cross-sectoral prevention and case management.

35. UNICEF will support the application of international standards and increased oversight capabilities, advocating for policies that strengthen the child protection system and advance the appreciation and knowledge of the importance of gathering child-sensitive data for effective policies and programmes. It will also enhance the capacity of legislative and judiciary bodies, prosecutors and national human rights institutions to monitor the rights of all children, especially vulnerable children.

36. Access to justice and quality social services will be promoted through developing the capacities of government, justice and social-service institutions and professionals, as well as caregivers and community leaders. Government training institutes will be instrumental in ensuring that pre- and in-service training is sustainable and inclusive. Needs assessment, and the identification of children in difficult situations, as well as case management, gatekeeping, registration and referral are the key elements of UNICEF technical assistance.

37. UNICEF will support models to inform policymaking and effective programmes for disadvantaged children. These include a model of integrated services to prevent family separation and institutionalization of children and a model of equitable access to justice for children in administrative, civil and criminal cases. A model of early identification and intervention services for children with disabilities at the community level will also be designed, aiming to foster cross-sectoral intervention and support the revision of legal provisions to address the required services for these children. This will emphasize supporting families at risk, including with parental skills-building, counselling and referral to other community services. Establishing referral mechanisms in various settings for services will be a priority. All models will be rigorously monitored, evaluated, costed and documented to make the case for nationwide policy change.

Summary budget table

Programme components and figures in the table below are used for illustrative purposes only.

Programme component	*(In thousands of United States dollars)*		
	Regular resources	*Other resources*	*Total*
Child rights-based monitoring systems and decision-making	1 500	6 000	7 500
Equitable access to services for child survival, learning and development	2 200	11 000	13 200
Child protection and access to justice	1 700	5 000	6 700
Programme effectiveness	1 330	3 000	4 330
Total	**6 730**	**25 000**	**31 730**

Programme and risk management

38. This CPD outlines UNICEF contributions to national results and serves as the primary unit of accountability to the Executive Board for results alignment and resources assigned to the programme at country level. The accountabilities of managers at country, regional and headquarters levels with respect to country programmes are prescribed in the organization's programme and operations policies. The programme of cooperation will be implemented in line with UNDAF and Delivering as One mechanisms and will ensure compliance with UNICEF policies and procedures and the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers.

39. The main risks to the achievement of results include limited buy-in on the part of national stakeholders, which can delay or stall government reforms, and the high turnover, low motivation and insufficient capacity of decision makers, managerial staff and skilled professionals. UNICEF will mitigate these risks by investing in building the capabilities of officials in public administration, particularly in results-based management, by anchoring programme results in the multiyear national development framework, and by generating public demand for results by disseminating evidence of successful models through traditional and social media, proving their potential benefits for children.

40. Communication and strategic partnerships will support the results of this country programme, promoting children's rights and stimulating public engagement. UNICEF seeks to inspire decision makers, the media and the general public to support the best interests of children in policymaking. Communication for development remains a core strategy to generate positive attitudes and behaviours towards children and to sustain progressive social norms.

41. Limited fiscal space and financial resources may affect social sectors, impacting vulnerable children first. UNICEF will continue to engage donors, participate in joint resource mobilization within the United Nations system, and cultivate new funding opportunities by closely working with development partners, as well as by building on corporate social responsibility.

42. The threat of earthquakes remains a sizable risk in seismically active zones. One ranking system placed the national earthquake hazard at 9.7.[19] UNICEF will periodically update partners and share with them the findings of the Inter-Agency Contingency Plan, and the UNICEF Earthquake Contingency Plan and Early Warning Early Action System.

Monitoring and evaluation

43. UNICEF is an active member of United Nations Country Team, chairs the technical working groups on Communication and Social Inclusion, and co-chairs the Gender and Youth groups. UNICEF is also part of the United Nations Peacebuilding Programme that seeks to reduce the risk of relapse into violent conflict. UNICEF will chair the Social Sector Development Outcome UNDAF Result Group.

44. Progress in achieving the objectives of this programme of cooperation will be monitored through the results and resources framework. UNICEF will systematically track progress towards the removal of barriers and bottlenecks through regular joint reviews with key partners and at the programme's end. The project-monitoring system and tools will be consolidated across all programme sectors.

45. UNICEF will support the Government to disaggregate data by geographical region, gender, age, ethnicity and disability status and to align national indicators with those of the Sustainable Development Goals, and will collaborate with the Government and other United Nations agencies to strengthen national data collection and management systems. The Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity (TransMonEE) system that captures a vast range of data relevant to social and economic domains, as well as Eurostat data, will be more systematically used and promoted among national stakeholders.

46. The Country Child Rights Monitoring Dashboard will support the monitoring of programme outcome indicators, using national data systems. Midterm data will be collected through the MICS in 2018. This will include specific data on attitudes towards children with disabilities and migrant children, overall knowledge of healthy child-rearing practices, adolescents' knowledge of risky behaviour, parental attitudes towards violence against children, and hand-washing behaviours. In 2019, UNICEF will conduct an equity-focused impact evaluation of the model on justice for children, accompanied by a cost-benefit analysis. The Youth- and Child-Friendly Local Governance initiative will be evaluated in 2019 and a country programme evaluation will be carried out in 2021. UNICEF will document case studies and good practices for sharing regionally and globally.

[19] http://www.inform-index.org/Countries/Country-profiles. The values are based on the scale of 10.

Annex

Results and resources framework

Kyrgyzstan – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, 2018-2022

Convention on the Rights of the Child: Articles 2, 15, 19,20, 23-29, 33, 37, 39 and 40 **National priorities: (related Sustainable Development Goals; other internationally recognized goals; and/or national goals):** State Programme on Family Support and Child Protection, 2017–2027; State Programme on Justice for Children, 2014–2018; National Health Programme, 2018–2022; Food Security and Nutrition Programme, 2018–2020; State programme on overcoming HIV infection until 2021; Education Development Strategy, 2012–2020; Safe schools and preschools, 2015–2024; National Strategy for Comprehensive Safety and Security; and National Development Strategy, 2018–2022 Sustainable Development Goals: 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16 and 17
UNDAF outcomes involving UNICEF: Outcome I: By 2022 there is increased productivity and greater opportunities for decent work and innovative entrepreneurship, industrialization, and domestic technology development. Outcome II: By 2022, state institutions at all levels perform in ways that are more accountable and inclusive, and that contribute to justice and sustainable peace. Outcome III: By 2022, communities are more resilient to climate and disaster risks and are engaged in sustainable and inclusive natural resource management and risk-informed development. Outcome IV. By 2022 the Kyrgyz social protection, health and education systems are inclusive and efficient and provide quality services. **Outcome indicators measuring change that includes UNICEF contribution** (being finalized)
Related draft UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Goal Areas:[1] Goal Area 1 - Every child survives and thrives. Goal Area 2 - Every child learns. Goal Area 3 - Every child protected from violence and exploitation. Goal Area 4 - Every child lives is a safe and clean environment. Goal Area 5 - Every child has an equitable chance in life.

[1] The final version will be presented to the UNICEF Executive Board for approval at its second regular session of 2017.

UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome, regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (in thousands of United States dollars)		
					RR	OR	Total
1. By 2022, the State has effective and accountable public administration systems to deliver results for disadvantaged children.	Percentage of Committee on the Rights of the Child Concluding Observations implemented B: 0% (2018) T: 50% (2022)	Committee on the Rights of the Child record http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/ State and non-State means, as well as progress updates of the State Coordination Council	State and non-State child rights monitoring organizations have capacity to generate credible evidence to inform advocacy and policy. Policymakers are able to use, and promote the use of, evidence for decision-making related to social protection. Public administration professionals have improved capacities to manage transparent and participatory budgeting processes to address child rights issues. Adolescents have and use opportunities to contribute to decision-making processes.	Parliament, Office of the Vice-Prime Minister, Ministries: Labour and Social Development; Education and Science; Health; Internal Affairs; Justice; and Ombudsman Institution, National Statistical Committee, State Agency for Youth and Sports, UNDP, UNFPA, other United Nations agencies	1 500	6 000	7 500
	Existence of mechanisms to promote civic engagement of adolescents, including marginalized adolescents B: None (2016) T: Mechanisms designed and endorsed (2022)	Normative decision of the relevant authority such as executive orders and/or action plans, and/or standards/protocols by Ministry of Education and Science, State Agency for Youth and Sports, and local municipalities					
	Percentage of children covered by social protection cash-assistance systems B: 14% (2016) T: 17% (2022)	Social protection administrative data forms 4 and 7 (Social Protection Management Information System, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey [MICS])					
	Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience with public services (Sustainable Development Goals and	National Statistical Committee record http://www.stat.kg/ru/indeks-doveriya-naseleniya/					

UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
					RR	OR	Total
	UNDAF indicator) B: 22% (2016) for public services provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development T: 40% (2022)						
2. By 2022, disadvantaged children have equitable access to health and education services to survive, learn, develop and contribute to resilient, inclusive and sustainable communities	Proportion of post-natal care visits to newborns within two days of discharge from health facility B: 25% (2014): bottom quintile 24%, urban 23%, rural 25% T: 30 percentage-point increase (2022)	MICS	Health staff have the capacity to provide quality perinatal, childcare and modern home-visiting services to the most disadvantaged boys and girls through strengthening the health system Duty-bearers are able to produce and operationalize multisectoral policies and standards to guide and monitor provision of micronutrient prevention services to the most disadvantaged women and children Capacities of service providers strengthened to provide adolescent-friendly services, including HIV prevention, for the vulnerable and most at risk adolescents Institutional capacities in early childhood care and education strengthened to deliver quality and equitable early learning and school readiness to the most disadvantaged girls and boys Education system is capable to provide quality learning and development through formal and non-formal education for children and adolescents, especially the	The Government, Ministries (Health and respective departments, Education and Science, Emergencies), Kyrgyz Academy of Education,WHO, UNESCO, other United Nations agencies	2 200	11 000	13 200
	Percentage of girls and young women 15–24 years who both correctly identify ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV and who reject major misconceptions about HIV transmission (by age groups 15–19 and 20–24) with comprehensive knowledge B: 17%, 22.4% T: 25%, 30%	MICS					
	Existence of a national policy or plan targeting anaemia-reduction in women and girls (2018–2022) B: None T: Exists National Multisectoral Committee for Nutrition established and functional B: None (2016)	Government decree Government decrees, official and sectoral reports					

UNICEF outcomes	*Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)*	*Means of verification*	*Indicative country programme outputs*	*Major partners, partnership frameworks*	*Indicative resources by country programme outcome, regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (in thousands of United States dollars)*		
					RR	*OR*	*Total*
	T: Functional and Government-run		most disadvantaged More children, communities and institutions have knowledge and skills for climate-resilient development and disaster risk reduction				
	Percentage of children 36–59 months on track in at least three of four development domains B: 78% (2014) T: 85% (2022)	MICS					
	Education Management Information System (EMIS) provides comprehensive and regular data on children out of school and dropout risks B: EMIS concept paper available (2017) T: EMIS is functional and includes individual records of children (2022)	EMIS records					
	Existence of national and local strategies for disaster risk reduction, adopted and financed, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (Sustainable Development Goal 11 b 1 and 11 b 2) B: None (2017) T: Exists (2022)	Ministry of Emergencies reports					
3. By 2022, disadvantaged children and their families utilise equitable access to justice and social services to prevent and respond to violence, abuse and family separation	Number of children under age 18 (0–17 years) living in residential care B: 8,000 (2016) T: 4,000 (2022)	Ministry of Labour and Social Development data	Government, service providers and caregivers have the capacity to realize children's rights to live in a family environment free from violence and discrimination Justice and administrative institutions are able to facilitate children's access to justice	Parliament, Office of the Vice-Prime Minister, State Registration Service, Ministries (Labour and Social Development, Education and	1 700	5 000	6 700
	Percentage of children 1–14 years who experienced psychological aggression or	MICS					

UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR), (in thousands of United States dollars)		
					RR	OR	Total
	physical punishment during the past month B: 57% (2014) T: 47% (2022)		services and redress mechanisms	Science, Health, Internal Affairs, Justice), Ombudsman Institution, academia, civil society, including parents associations, media			
	Women (20–49 years) married before age 18 B: 13% (2014) T: 9% (2022)	MICS					
	Targeted parents/primary caregivers, including those of children with disabilities, reached by programmes addressing child-rearing practices B: 0 % (2017) T: 80% (2022)	Ministry of Labour and Social Development and other officials, and reports by implementing partners					
	State-funded free legal aid is established, available and offered to children as beneficiaries in all areas of the country B: Limited to children in conflict with the law (2017) T: All legal aid centres accessible for children (2022)	Ministry of Justice and Bar Association records					
4. The country programme is efficiently designed, coordinated, managed and supported to meet quality programming standards in achieving results for children and to reduce the environmental footprint	Percentage of outcomes and outputs that are yearly reported as 'achieved' or 'on track' B: 0% T: >75%	UNICEF internal systems and public reports, including the country office annual report (COAR)	UNICEF staff and partners are provided guidance, tools and resources to effectively design and manage programmes UNICEF staff and partners are provided tools, guidance and resources for effective communication on child rights issues with stakeholders	Office of the Vice-Prime Minister, Ministries (Labour and Social Development, Education and Science, Health, Internal Affairs, Justice), United Nations Country Team	1 330	3 000	4 330
	Percentage of evaluation and audit recommendations implemented, closed and reported within 12 months B: 0% T: 100%	UNICEF internal systems and COAR					

UNICEF outcomes	*Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)*	*Means of verification*	*Indicative country programme outputs*	*Major partners, partnership frameworks*	*Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)*		
					RR	*OR*	*Total*
	Percentage of rolling workplans aligned with national priorities and approved by March B: 0% T: 100%	UNICEF internal systems and COAR		Thematic Work Groups, academia			
	Reduced environmental footprint of UNICEF operations and travel emissions, waste, water and paper consumption	Environmental footprint assessments in 2018					
Total resources					**6 730**	**25 000**	**31 730**

United Nations E/ICEF/2017/P/L.7

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
9 August 2017
English
Original: English/French/Spanish

For decision

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 2017
12-15 September 2017
Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Country programme document

Republic of Moldova

Summary

The country programme document (CPD) for the Republic of Moldova is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and approval at the present session, on a no-objection basis. The CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of $4,575,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $12,933,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2018 to 2022.

In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, the present document reflects comments made by Executive Board members on the draft CPD that was shared 12 weeks before the second regular session of 2017.

* E/ICEF/2017/14.

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Programme rationale

1. The Republic of Moldova is a lower-middle-income economy, the poorest in Europe in per capita terms.[1] The country's gross domestic product (GDP) saw a 7 per cent expansion in 2010 and a 0.5 per cent contraction in 2015, and employment has remained low, at just 40 per cent.[2] Child poverty, at 13 per cent, continues to be higher than the general poverty rate of 11 per cent.[3] Meanwhile, an aging population, a high level of out-migration, and a large informal economy (about one third of the work force is employed informally[2]) affect the Government's fiscal space for social services for children.

2. A number of policy reforms in the last decade engendered some progress towards the realization of child rights, especially deinstitutionalization, inclusive education and maternal and child health, with increasing resources being invested in these areas. The financial flow for childcare services increased, providing alternatives to placement in institutions. Monthly allowance for children in adoption and foster care increased by 15 per cent in 2015. Since 2012, a new funding formula ensured that 2 per cent of the State education budget is dedicated to inclusive education, leading to a significant progress in the integration of children with disabilities into mainstream schools. Support to youth-friendly health services is seeing incremental State co-funding, with these services fully financed through the National Health Insurance Company.

3. Social development and inclusion have been affected by governance instability, a weakening economy, a polarized society and prevailing harmful social norms, beliefs and practices. There have been several changes of government between 2014 and 2016, a fact that severely constrained the functioning of the State and slowed down the implementation of reforms. In 2015, the trust of the population in public institutions fell below 7 per cent.[4] These factors contributed to increasing child deprivations and inequities, as manifested in persistent abandonment and placement of children in institutions, limited access to child-friendly justice, a high percentage (8 per cent) of children still not attending primary school[5] and a high prevalence of violence against children.

4. The 2016 UNICEF Situation Analysis identified the most vulnerable groups as children from families living in poverty, children with disabilities, Roma children, and children left behind by migrant parents. The urban-rural divide and disparities among wealth quintiles in several child development outcomes persist. The preschool enrolment rate in rural villages continues to lag behind that of urban areas; in 2015, the gap was a full 33 percentage points.[5] While 75 per cent of the urban population uses flush toilets, only 9 per cent of the rural population has access to them. Whereas 3 per cent of children from the richest quintile are stunted, 11 per cent of children from the poorest quintile face chronic undernutrition.[6]

5. In 2015, infant and child mortality rates were 9.7 and 11.7 per 1,000 live births, respectively. An estimated 20 per cent of child deaths occur at home or within 24 hours of hospitalization (such as deaths from acute respiratory infections and injuries). Such deaths

[1] World Bank Group, *Moldova: Paths to Sustained Prosperity: A Systematic Country Diagnostic*, 2016.
[2] National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), *StatBank*, 2016.
[3] Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, *2015 Annual Social Report*.
[4] Public Opinion Barometer, November 2015.
[5] NBS, *Education in the Republic of Moldova*, 2016.
[6] 2012 Moldova Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), Chisinau, 2014.

can be prevented if timely health care is sought and provided.[7] Trends in other areas of child health also show stagnation or worsening. For example, child immunization rates are worsening[8] and anaemia prevalence among young children and women is persistently high.[9] Adolescents' reproductive health is poor, and sexually transmitted infections among youth are highly prevalent.[6] Roma girls continue to be subjected to child marriage and early childbearing.

6. The primary school net enrolment rate of 87 per cent is one of the lowest in the region,[9] and approximately half of 15-year-old children lack a basic level of proficiency in reading and mathematics. While the programme on inclusive education has led to significant results, 1,033 children with disabilities are assigned to special schools. Roma children's attendance rates are much lower at all levels of education, and they are more likely to drop out of school: only 52 per cent of Roma girls and 55 per cent of Roma boys receive primary education.[10]

7. High prevalence of child abandonment continues to impact vulnerable groups of children. About 2,200 children are in residential institutions (2015), and of these about one third are children with disabilities and one tenth are children below 3 years of age.[11] A similar situation has been recorded on the left bank of the Nistru River, where about 1,900 children live in institutions.[12] The high level of out-migration leads to prolonged family separation, with an estimated 21 per cent of the total child population having at least one biological parent abroad and 5 per cent living without both parents.[6]

8. Violence against children is widespread. Prevailing social norms stigmatize single mothers and pregnant adolescent girls, tolerate violence against children at home and in schools, and foster discrimination towards children and adolescents from vulnerable groups. An estimated 76 per cent of children, aged 2-14 years, experience violent disciplining at home, including psychological aggression, 48 per cent are subject to physical punishment.[6] During the 2014/2015 school year, educators reported 13,230 cases of abuse or violence against children. An estimated 1,334 cases of abuse of children were registered by the police, including cases of physical abuse and exploitation (28 per cent) and sexual abuse (26 per cent).[13]

9. Steady progress has been achieved in ensuring children's access to an equitable and child-sensitive justice system. However, crime prevention and reintegration services do not show comparable improvements. A recent UNICEF study reveals that, while the alternative to incarceration (diversion) is a legally adopted procedure, prosecutors and judges are still reluctant to apply it, and reintegration services at community level are not available. Negative social norms generally favour punishment of child offenders. In 2015, every seventh child offender was sentenced, and one in six sentenced children was imprisoned.[13][14] Half of the children who committed offences were below 14 years of age.

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[7] Ministry of Health, 2015, National Centre of Health Management, *Statistical Yearbook*, 2016.
[8] NBS, *StatBank*, 2016.
[9] UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2016.
[10] UNDP, UN-Women and UNICEF, *Roma in the Republic of Moldova in areas of their compact population*, 2013.
[11] NBS, *Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity*, statistical template, 2016.
[12] Administrative statistics, Tiraspol, 2016.
[13] General Police Inspectorate Annual Report, 2015.
[14] Ibid.

10. Children in Moldova remain disproportionately poor, and the majority of poor families (86 per cent) live in rural areas.[15] The national poverty rate is 10 per cent. Families with three or more children have a poverty rate of 23 per cent, and families with one child have 8 per cent. In 2015, social protection spending amounted to 13 per cent of the GDP;[16] however, over 60 per cent is spent on pensions. The share of families with children receiving poverty-targeted social assistance within the Ajutor Social programme decreased from 84 per cent in 2009 to 42 per cent in 2015.[17] Both the incidence and the depth of poverty are twice as high among Roma children as among non-Roma children.[18]

11. Adolescents' participation in social life is low, as is their contribution to decision-making processes, both at home and in society. Only 16 per cent of young people aged 15-24 are willing to participate in solving community problems, and 42 per cent state they cannot participate because of "lack of time" or because they "do not know how to get involved".[19] A participatory approach towards either adults or children engaging in local public administration is absent.

12. Realizing children's rights will require building the capacity of local public authorities, improving the coverage of services, introducing specialized services by qualified professionals in rural areas, and strengthening intersectoral cooperation to achieve better outreach in the provision of comprehensive services to the most vulnerable children. Disaggregated data are needed, especially on critical issues, such as violence against children. Caregivers and children need to have much better knowledge of available support mechanisms as well as improved access to information. Simplifying the overly bureaucratic procedures for clients will go a long way towards making individuals more likely to seek services.

13. Over the past decade, natural hazards caused significant losses in agriculture, the country's main economic sector. Climate projections indicate that the probability of catastrophic drought in Moldova is increasing and will trigger competition for scarce water resources. Climate change impacts could therefore adversely affect food security and economic growth in vulnerable rural areas, further exacerbating poverty.

Programme priorities and partnerships

14. This country programme was developed based on the 2016 UNICEF Situation Analysis of Children in Moldova (which complemented the joint United Nations Common Country Assessment), the evaluations of the 2013–2017 UNICEF country programme and of the United Nations Partnership Framework, as well as the regional multi-country evaluations of five UNICEF programmes: child survival, family environment, the juvenile justice system, and early learning and school readiness. The country programme was also informed by a number of project evaluations, as well as over 30 UNICEF-supported assessments in specific areas of child vulnerabilities carried out between 2013 and 2016.

[15] Ministry of Economy, *Poverty in the Republic of Moldova 2015*.
[16] Ministry of Finance, *Global Resources and Expenditures Framework of the National Public Budget 2011–2017*.
[17] Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, *2015 Annual Social Report*.
[18] UNDP, UN-Women and UNICEF, *Roma in the Republic of Moldova in areas of their compact population*, 2013.
[19] A Council of Europe policy review, *Child and youth participation in the Republic of Moldova*, 2013.

15. The country programme evaluation indicated that tangible results were obtained through evidence-based policy development, leveraging resources for children, and modelling. The evaluation recommended that more efforts be made to build the capacities of human rights institutions and local public authorities, to establish mechanisms for accountability, and to monitor the implementation of key policies and reforms related to child rights. Although communication for behaviour change strategies did promote a number of childcare practices, sharper focus on social mobilization is needed to address widespread harmful social norms, beliefs and practices, such as violent disciplining.

16. The planned outcomes and strategies for the new country programme were validated through a consultative process with the participation of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, the Ombudsperson for Child Rights, other United Nations agencies, civil society partners, and adolescents. Priority areas of engagement were identified taking into consideration major child deprivations, persisting inequities, and the lack of cohesive and concerted efforts to address the challenges faced by the most vulnerable groups such as children living in poverty and in rural areas, children with special needs, and Roma children.

17. Within the overall human rights agenda of the United Nations and major development partners, the focus of UNICEF remains on the realization of the rights of all children in Moldova and on the mobilization of key duty bearers towards coordinated action at national and subnational levels. The overarching goal of the country programme is to ensure that by 2022 all children of Moldova, especially the most vulnerable, enjoy their rights to education, health, an adequate standard of living, and participation, within a child-friendly legal environment, and are protected from abandonment, neglect, discrimination, exploitation and violence.

18. The priorities set for this country programme are aligned with national strategies, policies and programmes related to the realization of child rights and will contribute to the achievement of two outcomes of the 2018–2022 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF): "Governance, Human Rights, and Gender Equality" and "Inclusive and Equitable Social Development". Programme results will contribute to the realization of six Sustainable Development Goals (Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 10 and 16) focusing on the reduction of inequality and child poverty, a healthy life and the well-being of children, inclusive and equitable quality education for all children, adequate access to child-friendly justice, and the accountability of institutions. The results will also contribute to four goal areas of the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018–2021 (1, 2, 3 and 5): to prevent violence against children and ensure that every child has a fair chance to survive, thrive and learn in an equitable society.

19. Significant emphasis will be placed on providing continuous support to policy reforms, along with developing implementation models in selected districts to inform, scale up and strengthen the roles of key duty bearers at the subnational level, as part of the ongoing decentralization process. A stronger emphasis will be placed on changing harmful social norms through communication for behaviour change and social mobilization.

20. In order to strengthen state services, three key action areas were identified. First, the country programme will sharpen its focus on policy and legislative reforms to align national systems to the Sustainable Development Goals and to the concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Second, the programme will redouble efforts to increase the efficiency and accountability of national systems in building the capacities of professionals, civil society and adolescents. Third, the programme will design and test viable models to demonstrate the feasibility of scaling up more comprehensive delivery of social services for children at community level, with a focus on

intersectoral cooperation. Selected evaluations during the last year of programme implementation will assess results on improving children's lives.

21. To address persisting inequities and barriers to the realization of child rights, the country programme will pursue two interlinked outcomes: (a) achieve equitable child-sensitive systems and services, and (b) mobilize duty bearers and rights holders towards social change for child rights. UNICEF will support the Government and other duty bearers to ensure that national systems and services respond to the needs of all children in an equitable way, and that society fulfils its obligations to protect, respect and ensure realization of the rights of all children. The programme will also support children and adolescents to claim their rights.

Equitable child-sensitive systems and services

22. Improved intersectoral cooperation in health, development, education and social protection will support a more comprehensive system of priority family-focused and child-centred services. Stronger communication for social change will facilitate greater attention to child growth and development, enrolment in pre-primary education and completion of lower-secondary education, prevention of violence, and child poverty alleviation and reduction. A robust intersectoral mechanism will be strengthened in selected districts to monitor, collect and use the data on vulnerable children for efficient child-sensitive programming.

23. This programme component will address child abandonment and institutionalization by strengthening the capacity of the child protection system to apply the principle of the best interests of the child. Social norms contributing to abandonment will be addressed, with additional efforts made to eliminate social stigma against children with disabilities, adolescent pregnancy, and single motherhood. In selected districts, UNICEF will provide technical support to the modelling of specialized foster care services at the community level, while promoting the elimination of the drivers of institutionalization through poverty alleviation programmes, parental education and specialized services for children with disabilities and for single mothers.

24. The programme will aim to reduce violence against children by raising awareness of community members, improving parenting skills to prevent violent disciplining, strengthening the intersectoral mechanism for detection and referral of cases at selected district levels, and building the capacity of social system professionals. UNICEF will support social mobilization to engage communities and children on combating violence against children by enabling them to prevent and report on violence at home and in school. Whole-schools approaches will contribute to preventing violence in schools and will equip children and teachers with adequate skills to prevent violence and regularly report cases through official complaint mechanisms.

25. The reform of the justice system will focus on enabling greater access to child-friendly justice by modelling alternative approaches to detention (diversion schemes) and mediation. UNICEF will support the establishment of reintegration services at local level, and the provision of guidance and standards for judges and prosecutors to apply diversion measures. Evidence-based advocacy is expected to leverage funds at subnational level, including for setting up child-friendly interviewing rooms and practices for child offenders, victims and witnesses of crimes.

26. This programme component will continue to promote an inclusive school and preschool environment by working towards quality teaching and learning outcomes for the

most vulnerable children, including children with disabilities, and the application of child-friendly schools standards. UNICEF will further promote the identification and reintegration of out-of-school children. Modelling at community level will demonstrate viable options for inclusion and reintegration of Roma children into the education system. Communication for social change will promote the value of education in Roma communities and contribute to breaking stereotypes and to changing social norms. UNICEF will advance its collaboration with the Ministries of Education and Finance in order to extend the inclusive-education funding formula to benefit all vulnerable children, in addition to its current coverage of children with disabilities.

27. Investment for improved child survival, growth and development will continue. This component will strengthen the role of home-visiting nurses, expanding it beyond child health and growth to addressing child development and linking families with referral systems and other social services. Current efforts to improve the national vaccine procurement system will be combined with supporting the expansion of immunization coverage. Further legislative amendments will seek the inclusion of all provisions of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes in national legislation. UNICEF will give special attention to maternal and child nutrition, reduction of iron and folic acid deficiencies among pregnant women and children, and the nutrition of adolescents. Ongoing support to youth-friendly health services will promote a shift from the current financing method based on the number of youth residing in the catchment area to one based on performance. It will also expand the outreach to most-at-risk adolescents, focusing especially on gender-responsive adolescent health and healthy behaviour.

28. The country programme, complementing the efforts of financial institutions, will support the assessment of national poverty alleviation programmes, focusing on child-related benefits and allowances. UNICEF will promote expanded coverage of social protection measures and the introduction of simplified administrative procedures. In striving to increase outreach, identification and provision of assistance to vulnerable families with children, UNICEF will initiate the modelling of a single registry at a selected district level to cover social assistance, education and health services. Innovative approaches to cash benefits and equity-based targeting of social services will be sought as well.

Social change for child rights

29. This programme component will aim at improving the functions and capacities of key duty bearers, so that Moldovan society deepens its knowledge on and fulfils its obligations towards child rights. The programme will also work on empowering children and adolescents, increasing their engagement and ability to claim their rights. Additionally, this component will seek to influence social norms to eliminate violence, stigma and discrimination.

30. In promoting duty bearers' obligations, the programme will strengthen the capacities of the national human rights institutions and civil society organizations in monitoring child rights. The National Council on Child Rights Protection will be strengthened to enhance its capability for cross-sectoral coordination of key child-related strategies and to address in a timely manner emerging child rights issues. UNICEF will support the media's capacity in active and ethical reporting on child rights, and it will work with the private sector to positively change business behaviour and practices to maximize positive outcomes for the most vulnerable children.

31. Caregivers' engagement, capacities and skills will be improved, enabling them to take greater responsibility for appropriate childcare, including the health, development, education and protection of children. In selected districts, UNICEF will provide technical advice on improving caregivers' capacities to stimulate young children and to engage in positive child-rearing. These efforts will promote greater interaction with adolescents, encouraging them to adopt a healthy lifestyle and positive behaviour. Stronger involvement of caregivers in school management committees, including in developing school improvement plans and monitoring school performance, will be a priority.

32. This programme component will support the mandatory establishment of youth councils at the local level in order to foster greater adolescent and youth participation in decision-making and social life and to empower adolescents to become agents of social change. It will introduce innovative approaches for their participation. UNICEF will support modelling and testing a new cross-sectoral approach to the work of youth councils in selected communities, combined with facilitating local public authorities' engagement with, and financing of, youth councils.

33. This component will work towards greater social inclusion of the most vulnerable groups of children by demonstrating models of comprehensive interventions at the local level. UNICEF technical expertise will enable the alignment of child disability criteria of Moldova with the international methodology for classifying disability. It will promote psychosocial support services for children left behind, and improve harmonization of data collection between health, child protection and education systems. Capacities for developing early detection and early intervention services for children with disabilities and developmental delays will be strengthened in selected districts. To counter the impact of parent migration and family separation on child well-being, the programme will promote the enforcement of guardianship measures and build parents' awareness of the challenges faced by children left behind.

Programme effectiveness

34. The country programme will be efficiently coordinated and managed to systematically uphold programme quality standards and achieve results. Relevant expertise, tools, and guidance and resources will be made available to partners and stakeholders to allow quality design and efficient implementation of joint projects and activities. The drive for effective communication, advocacy and partnerships will be informed by high-level expertise and capacity-building of stakeholders, including in programme planning, monitoring and efficient implementation.

35. Knowledge generation will provide the necessary evidence and data, while knowledge management will safeguard the optimal use of UNICEF resources through effective and efficient programming and implementation. The country programme will focus on better interconnectedness and exchange of information among various government systems and platforms. UNICEF will also contribute to better data collection on the left bank of the Nistru River. Through policy dialogue and technical expertise, UNICEF will contribute to the implementation of reforms and the development of the National Development Strategy, "Moldova 2030", to ensure the prominence of child-focused priorities.

36. The country programme will use balanced multi-pronged strategies to reach tangible results for children. Advocacy will focus on the needs of the most vulnerable children and reach out to key duty bearers among all populations and ethnicities in Moldova, including in southern, eastern, and Roma-populated parts of the country — where more child deprivations are manifested. Engagement with the media will continue through traditional

channels, and will be strengthened through broadcast and social media, as well as through the direct engagement of adolescents. UNICEF will continue to build the media's awareness and promote increased ethical reporting on child rights. Communication for behaviour and social change will use the most recent regional and global evidence and develop specific strategies relevant to the Moldovan context to address deeply rooted social norms affecting children.

37. Capacity development of State agencies and civil society will continue to focus on both strategic planning and on building awareness of child rights, aiming to ensure better monitoring and effective, timely and coordinated actions of key stakeholders in addressing child rights violations, especially at the local level. Capacities of local public authorities will be enhanced to prioritize local-level financing of services for children. UNICEF will support capacity-building efforts related to disaster risk reduction so that children are prioritized in all interventions.

38. Strengthening partnerships and leveraging resources for children will remain a key goal of the country programme, building on current results and aiming to ensure additional funding from the State and donors in support of country programme priorities. To further enhance capacities in national child rights monitoring, UNICEF will continue its cooperation with the Child Rights Ombudsperson, the National Council on Child Rights Protection, the Bureau of Interethnic Relations, and the Council on the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination. UNICEF will maintain strong partnerships with the following ministries: Labour, Social Protection and Family; Youth and Sports; Education; Justice; and Health. The availability of disaggregated data to monitor the rights of children will be further enhanced through technical advice given to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and key line ministries to improve data collection tools and systems.

39. Continuous collaboration with donors, strengthened horizontal cooperation within the region, and UNICEF work within the United Nations system will contribute to the achievement of country programme outcomes. This will be accomplished through the creation of greater synergies, joint programming around a common human rights agenda, and adequate external financing of programme components. The partnership with international financial institutions will be further developed, especially around promoting social protection floors, complementing efforts on school optimization and child poverty reduction.

40. UNICEF will strengthen its partnership with the media and will engage adolescents in addressing harmful social norms and beliefs. Strong partnership with local civil society organizations will be fostered to model community-based services, including on the left bank of the Nistru River. Close partnership with academia will help to ensure the sustainability of capacity-building efforts, including through curricula updates for pre- and in-service training of professionals. Building strong partnership with the private sector will be a high priority for the country programme.

Summary budget table

Programme component	*(In thousands of United States dollars)*		
	Regular resources	*Other resources*	*Total*
Equitable, child-sensitive systems and services	2 525	8 400	10 925
Social change for child rights	1 300	4 000	5 300
Programme effectiveness	750	533	1 283
Total	**4 575**	**12 933**	**17 508**

Programme and risk management

41. This CPD outlines UNICEF contributions to national results and serves as the primary unit of accountability to the Executive Board for results alignment and resources assigned to the programme at country level. The accountabilities of managers at country, regional and headquarters levels with respect to country programmes are prescribed in the organization's programme and operations policies. The programme of cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Moldova will be implemented in line with UNDAF and Delivering as One mechanisms, and will ensure compliance with UNICEF policies and procedures and the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT).

42. The feasibility of the country programme relies on key assumptions, including political stability, political will to advance reforms, strengthened accountability frameworks, progressive stabilization of the economy, availability of adequate resources for implementation, and modelling of innovations.

43. Critical risks include the following: deterioration of the political and economic situation — which could lead to increased poverty — the stagnation of reforms, continuous out-migration of skilled professionals, lack of donor attention to social areas of work, and potential environmental emergencies. Risk mitigation measures will include effective and optimal management of available financial resources, leveraging partner resources for children, the strong compliance of staff and partners with HACT rules, and well-developed early warning and response mechanisms in the office's management and business continuity plans that enable a high degree of flexibility to respond to emergencies.

Monitoring and evaluation

44. Progress will be monitored in accordance with established indicators and targets, as outlined in the annex, and by using reliable means of verification. Sources of information will include the NBS, line ministries' reports and thematic statistical publications. Additional data needs will be identified and addressed through surveys and other evidence-generating assessments. Further capacity-building of the NBS and other relevant authorities will improve the availability, validity, and reliability of disaggregated data.

45. The programme of cooperation will enable regularly monitoring of the situation of children in Moldova and the identification of key barriers and bottlenecks to the progressive

realization of the rights of all children. UNICEF will focus on supporting the monitoring and report on progress in implementing the concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and on strengthening the capacities of national institutions.

46. The Prioritized Research, Impact-Monitoring and Evaluation (PRIME) system and the costed evaluation plan for this country programme will define the priority monitoring, research and evaluation needs for implementation of the programme, including the results of new models of services for children at the local level. Evaluation efforts will also focus on the results achieved by the national strategies on inclusive education and on child protection.

Annex

Results and resources framework

Moldova – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, 2018–2022

Convention on the Rights of the Child: Articles 2-7, 9, 11-21, 23-29, 31, 32, 34-37, 39- 41. **Sustainable Development Goals:** 1–4, 10 and 16. **National priorities:** National Development Strategy "Moldova 2020", Child Protection Strategy 2014–2020, Action Plan to support the Roma population 2016–2020, Strategy for Development of Education for All 2011–2020, National Strategy on Public Health 2014–2020
UNDAF (2018–2022) outcomes involving UNICEF, and outcome indicators measuring change that includes UNICEF contribution: Outcome 1: The people of Moldova, in particular the most vulnerable, demand and benefit from democratic, transparent and accountable governance, gender-sensitive, human rights- and evidence-based public policies, equitable services, and efficient, effective and responsive public institutions. **Indicators:** 1.3 Implementation rate of recommendations of human rights treaty bodies 1.6 Social distance (non-acceptance) with regard to groups vulnerable to discrimination 1.7 The justice system comprises efficient child-friendly and gender-sensitive mechanisms ensuring that survivors of all forms of violence have de facto access to justice, and perpetrators are held accountable Outcome 4: The people of Moldova, in particular the most vulnerable, demand and benefit from gender-sensitive and human rights-based, inclusive, effective and equitable education, health and social policies and services. **Indicators:** 4.1 Ratio between children with disabilities in regular schools and in special schools 4.3 DTP3 vaccination coverage rate 4.5 Adolescent birth rate per 1,000 women in the age group 15–19 years old 4.6 Proportion of households receiving Social Aid benefits 4.7 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by an intimate partner in the previous 12 months
Related draft UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Goal Areas:[1] 1, 2, 3 and 5

[1] The final version will be presented to the UNICEF Executive Board for approval at its second regular session of 2017.

UNICEF outcomes	*Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)*	*Means of verification*	*Indicative country programme outputs*	*Major partners, partnership frameworks*	*Indicative resources by country programme outcome, regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)*		
					RR	*OR*	*Total*
1. Equitable, child-sensitive systems and services By 2022, Moldova national systems and services are more inclusive, able to protect the rights of children, and respond to the needs of the most vulnerable children[2] in an equitable way	**(a) Percentage of districts that fully monitor, identify, assist, and report on, vulnerable children through the intersectoral mechanism[3] for prevention and protection of children from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and trafficking** B: Zero districts address all four elements (monitor, identify, assist and report) (2017) T: 30% of districts	Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family (MLSPF), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA), National Legal Aid Council and Local Public Authorities (LPAs) records	By 2022, national stakeholders have functional mechanisms, capacities and skills to prevent and protect children against discrimination, exploitation and violence, and prevent abandonment, family separation and neglect, as per the best interests of the child By 2022, justice system authorities and related support services have institutionalized procedures and practices to protect and reintegrate children in contact with the law By 2022, schools and preschools have capacity to apply and monitor quality teaching and learning and are able to address violence, dropout and absenteeism By 2022, the health system has improved capacity to generate demand and provide quality maternal and newborn, child and adolescent health services, including outreach, and to advise caregivers supporting child care, growth and development By 2022, the social protection	MoH, MoE, MLSPF, MoJ, State Chancellery, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy, LPAs, United Nations agencies, World Bank	2 525	8 400	10 925
	(b) Gross enrolment rate in pre-primary education B: Total 85%, urban 105%, rural 73% (2015) T: Total 90%, urban 100%, rural 78%	National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), MoE records					
	(c) Lower-secondary education completion rate B: 83% boys 84 %, girls 82%, urban 95%, rural 76% (2015/2016 school year) T: 90% boys 90%, girls 90%, urban 95%, rural 85%	NBS, MoE records					

[2] Child victims of violence, children in conflict with the law, out-of-school children, children with disabilities

[3] Institutions and professionals from child protection, education, health and social protection systems; parents, caregivers and communities; media

UNICEF outcomes	*Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)*	*Means of verification*	*Indicative country programme outputs*	*Major partners, partnership frameworks*	*Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)*		
					RR	*OR*	*Total*
	(d) Percentage of infants monitored in accordance with child care, growth and development standards, including home visiting[4] B: 74% (2012) Children from vulnerable families: 48% T: 85% Target for children from vulnerable families: 65%	MoH records	system and related mechanisms have the capacity to reach the most deprived families with children, and are able to deliver equitable services and financial assistance				
	(e) Impact of child benefits/ Social Aid on child poverty B: 2 percentage points' reduction of child poverty after receiving child benefits/ Social Aid (2014) T: 4 percentage points	NBS, MLSPF records, UNICEF studies					
2. Social change for child rights By 2022, Moldovan society has better knowledge about child rights and progressively fulfils its obligations, effectively supporting social outcomes for children, and the empowerment of the most vulnerable children and adolescents to claim their rights.	**(a) Percentage of caregivers in selected districts who accept children with disabilities in regular preschools/ schools** B: preschools 19%, schools 17% (2013) T: 30% each	UNICEF studies	By 2022, relevant duty bearers have the required capacities and skills to fulfil their obligations for the progressive realization of child rights. By 2022, caregivers in selected districts have the capacity and skills to take responsibility for child care, health, development, education and protection, and encourage and practise positive behaviour. By 2022, adolescents are empowered, have opportunities to claim and support the realization	MoH, MoE, MLSPF, Ministry of Youth and Sport, MoJ, Bureau for Inter-Ethnic Relations, LPAs, Youth councils, United Nations agencies, NGOs, Office of the Ombudsperson	1 300	4 000	5 300
	(b) Proportion of vulnerable pregnant mothers using social protection mechanisms[5] B: 0% (2016) T: 30%	MoH, MLSPF records					
	(c) Percentage of caregivers	NBS, MoJ records,					

[4] Adjusted global standard indicator: Newborns receiving postnatal care within two days of birth.
[5] Social benefits, psychosocial counselling, supervision and assistance by intersectoral mechanism.

UNICEF outcomes	*Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)*	*Means of verification*	*Indicative country programme outputs*	*Major partners, partnership frameworks*	*Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)*		
					RR	*OR*	*Total*
	in selected districts applying positive parenting practices B: 22% of children aged 2-14 experienced positive discipline methods (2012 MICS as a proxy indicator) T: 50% of children experience positive discipline methods	UNICEF studies	of child rights, and are able to adopt positive and healthy behaviours. By 2022, comprehensive models exist involving different national entities to address the challenges in the progressive realization of the rights of the most vulnerable children, in a sustainable manner	/			
	(d) Percentage of adolescents reporting that their views are listened to and taken seriously (always, most of the time, and sometimes) at local (rayon) and central level B: rayon level 38%, central level 30% (2013) T: 50%, 40%	Council of Europe measurements, UNICEF studies					
	(e) Proportion of children with disabilities supported through cross-sectoral coordination mechanism in targeted districts B: 0% (2016) T: 30%	MoH, MoE, MLSPF, MoJ, LPAs records					
3. Programme effectiveness The country programme is efficiently designed, coordinated, managed and supported to meet quality programming standards in achieving results for children.	**(a) Percentage of management and programme priorities indicators meeting the scorecard benchmarks** B: end-2017 data (Key Performance Indicators) T: 100%		**Output 10:** UNICEF partners and staff are provided guidance, tools and resources to effectively design and manage programmes. **Output 11:** UNICEF partners and staff have effective tools, guidance and resources for more effective communication on child rights with key stakeholders. **Output 12:** UNICEF partners and staff have latest tools, guidance		750	533	1 283

UNICEF outcomes	*Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)*	*Means of verification*	*Indicative country programme outputs*	*Major partners, partnership frameworks*	*Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)*		
					RR	*OR*	*Total*
			and resources for effective advocacy and partnerships on child rights issues with key stakeholders **Output 13:** Strategies to address cross-cutting issues related to child rights are developed and applied.				
Total resources					**4 575**	**12 933**	**17 508**

United Nations E/ICEF/2017/P/L.8

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
9 August 2017
English
Original: English/French/Spanish

For decision

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 2017
12-15 September 2017
Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Country programme document

Romania

Summary

The country programme document (CPD) for Romania is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and approval at the present session, on a no-objection basis. The CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of $4,260,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $17,500,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2018 to 2022.

In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, the present document reflects comments made by Executive Board members on the draft CPD that was shared 12 weeks before the second regular session of 2017.

* E/ICEF/2017/14

17-13721X (E) 100817

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Programme rationale

1. Romania is a Member State of the European Union, which it joined in 2007. While the country was severely affected by the 2008–2012 global economic and financial crisis, it boasted an annual economic growth rate of 5 per cent in 2016. Nearly 3.9 million children under age 18 (including 2 million adolescents) live in Romania, half of whom are girls. According to the 2011 census, 3 per cent of the population belongs to the Roma ethnic minority, although various estimates place this percentage much higher. Romania faces multiple demographic challenges: its overall population is decreasing and the rural population, more vulnerable than urban dwellers to poverty and social exclusion, remains at around 50 per cent.[1]

2. The revival of the National Authority for the Protection of Child Rights and Adoption (NAPCRA) in 2014 gave higher visibility to children's issues and a new impetus for reforms in child protection. Likewise, the 2014–2020 National Strategies on social inclusion, child rights, education, and health and youth, which frame the allocation of significant European Union funding, provide an ambitious and long-term vision for the progressive realization of the rights of all children.

3. The situation of children in Romania has improved dramatically in the past 15 years. The infant mortality rate decreased sharply, from 18.6 (2000) to 10 per 1,000 live births (2015).[2] Nevertheless, it remains the highest in the European Union, more than double the European Union average. While the neonatal mortality rate is 5 per 1,000 live births (2014), the rural rate is almost double that of urban areas.[3] It is estimated that low birthweight affects 9 per cent of newborns, though data on nutrition and growth standards need updating. At 14.4 per 100,000 live births (2015), the maternal mortality ratio is significantly lower than it was in 2000 but has been increasing since 2012. Teenage mothers account for 10 per cent of all births.[4]

4. Education has seen significant improvements but disparities remain. The gross enrolment rate in preschool education increased between 2001 and 2015, from 66 per cent to 90 per cent.[5] The enrolment rate of Roma children in preschool education was lower than the national average by 40 per cent [6] and by 16 percentage points[7] in rural areas. The enrolment rate of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools increased from 2 per cent (2000) to 53 per cent (2014).[8] An estimated 300,000 children remain out of school, and the rate of completion of compulsory education is decreasing. Roma children are 6 times more likely than other children not to complete secondary education. The rate of rural children leaving school early is 3 times that of urban children.[9]

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[1] National Institute of Statistics, National Census, 2011, http://www.recensamantromania.ro/.
[2] United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, Levels and Trends in Child Mortality, 2015.
[3] UNICEF, draft Situation Analysis, 2017.
[4] Romanian Institute for Women and Child Health, Maternal Mortality, 2016.
[5] Ministry of Education, *State of Education* report, 2015.
[6] World Bank, *Toward an Equal Start: Closing the Early Learning gap for Roma Children in Eastern Europe*, 2012.
[7] Ministry of National Education, *State of Education* report, 2015.
[8] Romanian Agency for Quality Assessment in Pre-university Education, 2016.
[9] Institute of Education Sciences data, based on National Institute of Statistics data.

5. While the performance of Romanian students in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests is slowly improving, according to 2016 PISA, close to 40 per cent of adolescents remain functionally illiterate and innumerate. Gender disparities favour girls at all levels of education, in terms of enrolment (77 per cent, compared with 72.1 per cent for boys), number of years in school (14.1 versus 12.9 years) and school performance.[10]

6. The number of children in formal care, dropping steadily, is down to 57,279 (2015). Of these children, 18,631 are in foster care, 13,971 are with relatives, 4,386 are with other families, and 20,291 are in placement centres. This represents a decrease of almost 12 per cent of the number, and of 14 per cent of the ratio, of institutionalized children since 2010. After institutionalization of children under 3 years of age was banned in 2014, the number of children in this age group decreased by 28 per cent.[11] The lack of prevention services for vulnerable families, however, means that some 5,000 children still enter the childcare system every year. Children with disabilities, Roma children and boys continue to be overrepresented in institutions,[12] while the percentage of adolescents in residential care is fairly constant, around 60 per cent.

7. Whereas violence against children remains widely underreported,[13] the number of cases reported has been increasing slowly, from 13,500 in 2015 to over 10,000 for the first nine months of 2016. This is attributable to increased awareness of caregivers, of the general population and of children themselves, following intensive campaigns by various stakeholders, including UNICEF. Girls and boys are affected equally by violence, but rural children are more at risk.[14]

8. Data disaggregation by age group, ethnicity, sex, (dis)ability or socioeconomic background remains inadequate. Nevertheless, all available studies (including those of UNICEF) show that the most vulnerable children are found in poor communities, Roma families, rural areas, and are children with disabilities. Social norms and expectations largely explain unequal gender power relations affecting girls and women in most areas (especially sexual violence, restricted opportunities), although boys are at disadvantage in some other areas (education, deprivation of liberty and institutionalization). Many children face multiple forms of discrimination at once.[15]

9. Nearly 29 per cent of Romanian children suffer from severe material deprivation, which is significantly greater than in other European Union countries. In 2008–2015, the poverty rate for children was consistently 10 per cent higher than the overall average, and the highest by far among all age groups.[16]

10. The main determinants of social exclusion are complex, interlinked and cross-generational. These include: inadequate and inequitable budget allocation to social sectors at all levels; insufficient secondary norms, standards, tools and methodologies; limited capacity of, and coordination between, the health, education, social and child protection systems; low access to services due to poor coverage (especially in rural areas) and

[10] PISA, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2016.
[11] NAPCRA, http://www.copii.ro/statistici.
[12] Children in Public Care, NACRPA, UNICEF, World Bank, 2016.
[13] NAPCRA, http://www.copii.ro/statistici/.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Eurostat, http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat.
[16] UNICEF, draft Situation Analysis, 2017.

insufficient outreach capacity; substandard quality of basic services and shortage of qualified professionals locally; and low demand from vulnerable families, who also lack the ability to fully support their children. In addition, there exist social norms, beliefs and stereotypes tolerating discrimination against Roma people, children with disabilities, and girls, as well as a general acceptance of violence against children.

11. The normative framework is mostly aligned with the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and European Union standards, but its implementation remains challenging due to inadequate implementation mechanisms. Since 2007, the Government of Romania has significantly developed its capacity to generate quality data, which however remain under-utilized in policy and legislative processes. Performance monitoring and evaluations are rarely conducted, and most research related to children is carried out by international and local organizations.

12. The Ombudsman Institution protects citizens' rights and liberties in their relations with public institutions. The Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for child rights, families, youth, pensioners and persons with disabilities faces several challenges: its mandate is too broad in terms of vulnerable populations and too narrow in terms of functions; it is not well known among the population (including children); and the dialogue between civil society and the Ombudsman Institution remains inadequate.

13. In addition to being underfunded, social sectors do not allocate their financial resources in an equitable manner, and this leads to insufficient funding for community-based, preventive and outreach services. As a result, at the local level, especially in rural areas, there is a dearth of quality services across health, education, and social and child protection. These services, where they exist, often fail to collaborate vertically or horizontally, and are not necessarily used by vulnerable families. Specialized services for children are available only in a fragmented way in urban centres, making their access especially challenging for families who live in poverty and/or in rural areas, especially those from Roma communities. The referral system for community-based services does not function well, mostly because of the absence of these services at the local level and because of inadequate protocols.

14. Stereotyped gender roles and discrimination against Roma children and children with disabilities result in fewer opportunities, more difficult access to services and lower expectations on the part of excluded children and their families. The fairly high tolerance towards violence against children permeates society, including parents and professionals who are working with children and expected to protect them. While there are significant differences between rural and urban areas (where information is more readily available), overall there is poor knowledge about child rights, positive discipline and obligations towards children. This situation calls for investing in developing the competencies and awareness of parents and caregivers.

15. Both the midterm review of the 2012–2017 country programme and the draft midterm assessment of the model on provision of social services at the local level found that rigorously testing and evaluating innovations at the local level are key to generating credible, relevant evidence in Romania. Combined with high-level advocacy and policy dialogue, this evidence can be used successfully to influence the normative framework and budget allocations for children, especially the most vulnerable. Modelling must be sharply focused, firmly based on a clear determinant analysis, and taking an integrated approach.

16. Government and other partners have highlighted that the distinct advantage of UNICEF comes from its capacity to combine global/regional expertise and innovative local

experience to propose policy options and support their implementation in a sustainable manner. Identifying and generating high-quality and cutting-edge evidence is crucial to the success of the country programme and to UNICEF's ability to provide policy advice. It is recommended to increase access to the international expertise of staff, external experts (particularly for evaluations and research) and European Union countries and international organizations.

17. The UNICEF brand has a high level of credibility among the general public and decision makers. This is combined with a recognized ability to put issues on the public and political agenda through advocacy and media communication, as well as to convene partners and counterparts.

18. As a European Union Member State with an upper-middle-income economy, Romania has developed solid good practices and expertise in the areas of child rights monitoring, education, health and child protection. This is matched by a growing interest from a number of countries in sharing experience with Romania, as shown by recent exchanges with Peru, the Republic of Moldova, Tunisia and Ukraine. Many Romanian partners at the national and subnational levels seek to learn from other countries and to become part of regional or global initiatives (for example, Romania is a pathfinder country in the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children).

19. The Unit for Development Assistance is in charge of the Official Development Assistance within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Preliminary discussions show a strong interest in both strengthening and linking horizontal cooperation and ODA on issues related to children. UNICEF is seen as a potential partner for this new area of work. Romania has also shown a keen interest in supporting the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals globally.

Programme priorities and partnerships

20. The country programme aims to contribute to the development, in Romania and beyond its borders, of quality, universal, community-based, child- and family-centred services, and to facilitate the transformation of social norms to overcome discrimination and violence against children, thus supporting the progressive realization of child rights and the reduction of equity gaps affecting children and their families.

21. The Government of Romania and UNICEF will expand their partnership for children beyond the country's borders to ensure that Romania increasingly contributes with its experience, expertise and resources to regional and global efforts to advance child rights and child-related Sustainable Development Goals. In Romania, social inclusion of all children and adolescents, especially the most vulnerable, will be improved by enhancing the availability, accessibility, quality, equity and coordination of the health, education and child protection systems on the one hand, and by enhancing protective social norms on the other. This will be supported by developing national policies for children and adolescents and their families (especially vulnerable ones) that are evidence-based, equitable and adequately financed, and that are designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated in a participatory and transparent manner.

22. All key issues and priorities for advancing child rights identified in this programme of cooperation are included in the 2014-2020 National Strategies, ensuring strategic alignment with national priorities and budgets. The programme will contribute to the promotion and implementation of several Sustainable Development Goals, both in and outside Romania:

no poverty (Goal 1), good health and well-being (Goal 3), quality education (Goal 4), gender equality (Goal 5), reduced inequalities (Goal 10), peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16) and partnership for the sustainable development (Goal 17). Expected results will also contribute to the implementation of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, in particular the goal areas that every child survives and thrives, every child learns, every child is protected from violence and exploitation, and every child has an equitable chance in life.

23. Building on the progress achieved and lessons learned so far, results will be pursued through three complementary programme components. The first component will benefit from the other two, since it will use evidence and policies generated by Romania and also support reforms at national level. Romania will need to test and demonstrate good practices in order to share them. In turn, the second and third components provide complementary evidence based on models, innovations, evaluations, research and studies (a) to strengthen policies and budget allocations (including for the scaling-up of models) through advocacy, partnerships and capacity-building, and (b) to influence social norms through communication campaigns and social engagement.

Sharing experience and resources to promote child rights beyond borders

24. This first programme component responds to the expectations of the Government of Romania to expand its partnership with UNICEF beyond its borders, based on evidence showing that some good practices in this area have been developed over the past few decades. UNICEF will support line ministries to identify, document and validate good practices (including through evaluations) and, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, promote and share a number of good practices with other countries. Currently there is strong interest in collaborating with Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine, including on sharing lessons learned during the European Union accession process.

25. On 1 January 2019, Romania will assume for six months the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union. UNICEF will cooperate with the Romanian institutions in charge of child rights promotion and social inclusion aiming to include possible priorities and events related to child rights in the National Program of Priorities of the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and in the calendar of events.

26. UNICEF will also increase the share of its local fundraising allocated to UNICEF-supported programmes and initiatives internationally. Based on trends and forecasts, private sector fundraising is expected to grow in the country, reflecting the increasing public engagement in child rights issues, in Romania and beyond its borders. This cooperation beyond borders will be framed by the child-related Sustainable Development Goals.

Social inclusion

27. The second programme component aims at improving the social inclusion of all children in Romania, especially girls and boys in rural areas, Roma families, communities living in poverty and children with disabilities. This programme component seeks to achieve multisectoral results, as determinants of child rights violations occur across the various sectors. This approach has been promoted by UNICEF for several years and is consistent with the emphasis of the UNICEF Strategic Plan on cross-sectoral strategies.

28. At the core of this outcome is the testing of cross-sectoral models: the Minimum Package of Services for vulnerable children and their families, and the Quality, Inclusive Education Package. Both packages are currently being modelled and will be evaluated in

2019. The nationwide scaling-up of these two models is linked to the third programme component, on governance and partnerships. UNICEF will develop, monitor and evaluate — in close collaboration with State authorities at all levels and civil society — innovative basic and specialized services to benefit all children, especially vulnerable children and their families. As key strategies, UNICEF will support outreach, promotion of non-discriminatory social norms, empowerment of families and building the capacities of service providers.

29. Modelling will be complemented by the generation and sharing of cutting-edge evidence, technical expertise, intense advocacy and broad partnerships. UNICEF and national authorities, in cooperation with civil society, will strive to accelerate the deinstitutionalization process and transition to community-based care, and to improve learning and health outcomes of all children. This will be achieved by focusing on preventing unnecessary separation of children from their families, by enhancing the relevance, quality and inclusiveness of the pre-university education system, and by strengthening the capacity of the health sector to lead reforms for better health outcomes for children, especially around neonatal care and teenage pregnancy.

30. Combating violence against girls, boys and women will remain a key priority of this programme of cooperation, and will be an integral part of UNICEF work on modelling, policy support, evidence-generation, communication for social change, and advocacy. This component will contribute to translating the National Strategy on Child Rights and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), ratified by Romania in 2016, into policies and budgets. Ultimately, implementing the Strategy and Convention will result in new community-based and specialized services, as well as more protective social norms.

31. Communication for social change will focus on strengthening the capacity of professionals working with children (including adolescents) and their families to prevent and address discrimination and violence. It also aims to improve the competencies of these professionals in the areas of communication and cross-sectoral approaches. This involves enhancing the capacity of parents and children to claim their rights and demand quality services. At the same time, caregivers will be helped to provide a protective, stimulating and supportive environment for children.

Governance and partnerships for children

32. The third programme component covers the work that UNICEF will undertake with national counterparts and partners to improve the enabling environment for child rights realization. The outcome will be the enhanced capacity of central authorities to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate evidence-based policies for children and their families, focusing on the most vulnerable. It will also strengthen key partnerships to increase national commitment for children and for social reforms.

33. UNICEF will provide technical assistance and capacity-strengthening to support the scaling-up of tested and evaluated models that facilitate the development of policies and the allocation of budgets at all levels of administration. Stronger data-generation, use of evidence and child rights monitoring will be key outputs, so that policy design and implementation are more rigorous and evidence-based. A joint Government–UNICEF research and evaluation agenda will contribute to the systematic generation of data and related analysis. Working closely with the National Institute of Statistics and the Ministries of Labour and Social Justice (especially NAPCRA), Health, and National Education, this programme component will contribute to greater national capacity for improved and

harmonized child rights monitoring and policy evaluation. UNICEF will further intensify its collaboration with the National Human Rights Institution to improve its ability to monitor child rights in line with the Paris principles, and will also support the establishment of a dedicated national human rights institution for child rights. Partnerships with civil society will be essential, as will the stronger capacity of non-governmental organizations to monitor and report on child rights.

34. As policy implementation requires adequate and equitable financing, UNICEF will significantly strengthen its work on public financing for children, providing technical support to improve the capabilities of line ministries in this field. To this end, UNICEF will intensify its engagement with the Ministries of Public Finances, of Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds for more equitable allocation of resources. At the same time, UNICEF will advocate to improve the capacity of public authorities at all levels to cost, budget and allocate funding for children. These efforts call for new partnerships with civil society, think tanks and academia, both national and international, as well as continued collaboration with the World Bank.

35. Though implementation of the 2014–2020 National Strategies is lagging, targeted technical support, partnerships and advocacy could unlock millions of euros for children. UNICEF will continue to work closely with the Government of Romania, especially line ministries and the Ministry of Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds, to support the country's access to considerable financial resources from the European Union and from Norway–European Economic Area Grants. Models supported by UNICEF are being considered for replication with European Union funding. The National Strategy on Child Rights and the National Child Rights Council (under the leadership of the National Authority for Child Rights Protection) provide an important opportunity to strengthen child rights- monitoring systems and partnerships.

36. To achieve results, it is essential to maintain child rights and the work of UNICEF high on the public and political agenda, and to engage more with the media and the general public, including adolescents. This will be accomplished through targeted public and private advocacy, and broad partnerships leading to an improved engagement on child rights. Cooperation with civil society will be key for identifying expertise and potential innovations, jointly advocating for child rights and providing space for children and adolescents to engage in civic life. UNICEF will further extend its partnership with the corporate sector to mobilize resources and commitment for the realization of child rights. Partnerships with the media will support better reporting on child rights violations, amplify the voice of UNICEF, place children at the centre of the public and political agenda, and initiate social engagement on the priorities of this country programme. UNICEF will increasingly work with children and adolescents themselves to strengthen their capacity to make their voices heard and will create space for this to happen.

37. A human rights-based approach will continue to underpin the country programme, from knowledge-generation and provision of technical assistance to advocacy and partnerships. Policy dialogue among UNICEF, national authorities and other stakeholders will be based on international and European Union standards, including those of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Support to gender equality will be strengthened by mainstreaming gender in all programme components, from data-generation and capacity-building to modelling and advocacy. The country programme will support the health system to become more gender-responsive and will contribute to preventing and addressing gender-based violence as a

priority. UNICEF will support the Government and Parliament in their efforts to align national legislation with the Istanbul Convention.

38. Strategic partnership will be maintained and strengthened between UNICEF and the Government (especially its relevant ministries: Health; National Education; Labour and Social Justice; Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds; and, increasingly, with Public Finances and the Minister Delegate for European Affairs within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). UNICEF will continue to work with NAPCRA. These partnerships will enable the development of the normative framework and secondary legislation and budget, as well as the national scale-up of innovative models. Stronger collaboration with Parliament will strengthen legislation and improve public financing for children. UNICEF will continue to work with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, World Health Organization, World Bank, International Monetary Fund and International Organization for Migration on issues of common interest such as access to services for vulnerable populations.

Programme effectiveness

39. This component will include activities related to the coordination and implementation of the country partnership, and will provide cross-cutting support to all programme areas.

Summary budget table

Programme component	*(In thousands of United States dollars)*		
	Regular resources	*Other resources*	*Total*
Sharing experience and resources beyond borders	580	420	1 000
Social inclusion	2 000	13 605	15 605
Governance and partnerships for children	1 300	3 100	4 400
Programme effectiveness	380	375	755
Total	**4 260**	**17 500**	**21 760**

Programme and risk management

40. This document outlines UNICEF contributions to national results and serves as the primary unit of accountability to the Executive Board for results alignment and resources assigned to the programme at country level. Accountabilities of managers at the country, regional and headquarters levels with respect to country programmes are prescribed in the organization's programme and operations policies and procedures.

41. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice will have overall responsibility for coordination of this partnership. UNICEF works with relevant ministries and departments at national and subnational levels to ensure efficient and effective programme implementation. Rolling workplans will be agreed with government counterparts and jointly monitored through periodic reviews and field visits. Local models will be guided by a National Steering Committee, composed of

representatives from key ministries, subnational authorities and representatives of civil society and donors so as to ensure ownership, a coordinated approach and the use of results for policy and budget development. The programme will follow the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers to ensure greater accountability for results achieved by implementing partners receiving cash transfers.

42. Opportunities arising from the strong Government–UNICEF partnership, European Union Presidency, Unit for Development Assistance within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, existence of good practices in Romania, and collaboration with the European Commission and Parliament will be leveraged to place child rights and social inclusion higher on the national and European Union agendas.

43. Coordinated measures must be taken to protect vulnerable families from economic shock and exclusion. The global economic crisis that began in 2008 showed that social safety nets were not sufficient in this regard.[17] While long-term reform is envisioned by the Government and UNICEF, this is challenging when frequent government changes occur. One potential risk is climate change. Though it does not seem to have made a significant impact on Romania so far, this needs further research. Regarding emergencies, overall Romania has a fairly solid capacity to respond to those of small to medium size. The country is subject to frequent small-scale earthquakes; only a major earthquake affecting the capital city could require external assistance.

Monitoring and evaluation

44. UNICEF will continue to use field-monitoring visits, annual and midterm reviews, and evaluations, along with its other regular processes and mechanisms, to monitor progress against results. All models implemented will be evaluated independently, and the findings used both to adjust the models and to propose policy advice and possible scale-up. Data will continue to be collected and analysed so that the country programme can identify and make adjustments to its strategies and goals. Activities will be conducted in close collaboration with national and subnational authorities, United Nations agencies and civil society, and the views of children and adolescents will be gathered on a regular basis to assess progress and priorities. The country programme will monitor programmes and policies and use the evidence to gauge whether the equity approach is reaching the most marginalized.

45. As part of the UNICEF effort to increase national monitoring and evaluation capacity, many of the country programme indicators and monitoring and evaluation plans will be integrated into the monitoring and evaluation frameworks of relevant national strategies, as well as into the annual reports of the Government. In addition, UNICEF will support the Government to conduct external evaluations of key national strategies, especially the National Strategy on Child Rights, which covers relevant areas in health, education and child protection.

46. Acknowledging that the availability and disaggregation of data are insufficient, UNICEF will continue to work with line ministries and the National Institute of Statistics to

[17] UNICEF. Impacts of the international economic crisis in Romania 2009-2010. 2011. http://www.unicef.org/romania/Impacts_of_the_international_crisis.pdf.

strengthen their capacity in this area, including by supporting the participation of Romania in the Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity (TransMonEE) database.

Annex

Results and resources framework

Romania – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, 2018–2022

Convention on the Rights of the Child: Articles 1–10, 12–37, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45

National priorities: 2014–2020 National Strategies: Child Rights; Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction; Health; Education; Roma Social Inclusion; Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities; Youth

Related draft UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Goal Areas:[1] Goal areas 1, 2, 3 and 5

UNICEF outcomes	*Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)*	*Means of verification*	*Indicative country programme outputs*	*Major partners, partnership frameworks*	*Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)*		
					RR	*OR*	*Total*
Outcome 1 Romania increasingly contributes to regional and global efforts to advance child rights and child-related Sustainable Development Goals with its experience, expertise and resources.	# of evaluated good practices from Romania adopted by other countries B: 0 T: 4	Unit for Development Assistance within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs annual reports	The Government of Romania has an increased capacity to provide technical and financial assistance, to support horizontal cooperation and to use its official development assistance resources for the rights of children and adolescents. Romanians increasingly contribute to UNICEF's resource mobilization for vulnerable children and adolescents, in Romania and beyond its borders.	Ministries: Foreign Affairs; Labour and Social Justice (including NAPCRA); Health; National Education; Delegate Minister for European Affairs; and Unit for Development Assistance within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; corporate sector; private individual donors	580	420	1 000
	Unit for Development Assistance within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will promote in its activities child rights and the SDGs related to children B: N/A plans under development T: By 2017, plans include activities for promotion of child rights and SDGs related to children	Unit for Development Assistance within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs annual reports					
	Amount of local private	Revenue and					

[1] The final version will be presented to the UNICEF Executive Board for approval at its second regular session of 2017.

UNICEF outcomes	*Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)*	*Means of verification*	*Indicative country programme outputs*	*Major partners, partnership frameworks*	*Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)*		
					RR	*OR*	*Total*
	sector fundraising contributed to UNICEF internationally B: $1.3 million over five years T: TBD in Q3 2017	expenditure and country programme reports					
Outcome 2 The social inclusion of all children and adolescents, especially vulnerable ones, is supported by quality, equitable and coordinated health, education and child protection systems and protective social norms	The Government and Parliament align legislation with the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) B: no modification T: 50% of intended modifications adopted	Report of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention Reports of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Authorities at national and subnational levels, communities, schools and caregivers have an increased capacity to address harmful social norms, to generate demand for and provide services, as well as to support an environment conducive to the equitable access of disadvantaged children and adolescents, especially those from Roma communities and those with disabilities, to quality, inclusive education National and subnational child protection systems and other stakeholders have an increased capacity to generate demand and provide a quality continuum of services in a coordinated manner, and to support protective norms for children and adolescents and their families (including those with disabilities and Roma), focusing on protection from, and prevention of, violence and child separation National and subnational systems and partners have increased capacity to address negative attitudes and harmful social norms, to generate demand for quality health services and information.	Ministries: Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds, Labour and Social Justice (including NAPCRA), Health; National Education,, county authorities, local authorities, universities, Professional Association of Social Assistants, Professional Association of Nurses, Association of Family Practitioners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs)	2 000	13 605	15 605
	% of rural communities covered with adequate home-visiting services for children 0–3 focused on child health, care and development B: 36% T: increase by 25%	Administrative data for communities having in place social assistants and community nurses					
	% of counties that provide services to prevent unnecessary separation of children from their families B: 2.4% T: 50%	Annual Reports of the National Authority for Child Rights Protection					

UNICEF outcomes	*Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)*	*Means of verification*	*Indicative country programme outputs*	*Major partners, partnership frameworks*	*Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)*		
					RR	*OR*	*Total*
	The Ministry of Education develops and implements the Plan attached to the Ministerial Order on Preventing and Reducing School Desegregation and Improving the Quality of Education B: not implemented T: 50% implemented	Annual Report from the Ministry of National Education	and to provide equitable access for all children, including Roma children and children with disabilities, with a focus on young children, adolescents and mothers				
	The Government at all levels is implementing the multiannual integrated health education programme B: 0% implemented T: 50% implemented	Reports from the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Health Education and Promotion					
Outcome 3 National policies affecting children and adolescents and their families (especially those from Roma communities and those with disabilities) are evidence-based, equitable and adequately financed	The central authorities follow effective planning and monitoring of the National Child Rights Strategy B: annual plans and annual monitoring reports are not available T: annual plans are adopted and annual monitoring reports are produced	UNICEF country office annual reports	National authorities, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, have the capacity to generate, analyse and use relevant disaggregated data and knowledge on child rights issues for evidence-based policies and monitoring By the end of 2022, national authorities have increased their capacity to cost, budget and allocate funding for children, in a more transparent, efficient and equitable way Government and other partners, including children and adolescents, are engaged, mobilized and join efforts to drive social change for girls and boys, especially for Roma children and children with disabilities	Parliament, Office of the Prime Minister, Ministries: Labour and Social Justice (including NAPCRA), Health, National Education, Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds, and National Institute for Statistics, Ombudsman, universities, professional associations, NGOs (including those engaging children)	1 300	3 100	4 400
	Central authorities replicate a universal Minimum Package of Services and a Quality Inclusive Education Package, focusing on vulnerable children and their families, in additional counties or nationwide B: 2.4% of the counties covered T: 50% of the counties covered	Reports from the Ministries of Labour and Social Justice, Health and National Education					

UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome, regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (in thousands of United States dollars)		
					RR	OR	Total
				media, academia, private sector			
Outcome 4 The Government of Romania – UNICEF country partnership meets quality standards in achieving results for children	The country programme of cooperation is effectively designed, coordinated, managed and supported B Yes T Yes	Relevant reviews and reporting of the country programme of cooperation	Guidance, tools and resources to effectively and efficiently design and manage the programme are available to UNICEF and its partners Guidance, tools and resources to effectively generate, analyse, and utilize statistical and qualitative information for child rights, including a monitoring system, are available Guidance, tools and resources for effective communication with stakeholders on child rights issues are available to UNICEF and its partners Strategies to address cross-cutting issues related to child rights are developed and applied throughout the programme of cooperation	Government counterparts, civil society partners, UNICEF staff from the country offices and Regional Office	380	375	755
Total resources					**4 260**	**17 500**	**21 760**